(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the costs to be incurred on purchase of the said planes and ship;

(d) whether Britain is going to withdraw its ship 'Invincible' in 2006 from its fleet: and

(e) if so, the reasons for purchasing this ship of such an obsolete technology?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Alternative medicines for treatment of high altitude ailments of soldiers

764. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences is at present using systems of alternative medicine like Homoeopathy and Ayurveda for treating soldiers suffering from high altitude injuries like frost bite; and

(b) if so, since when this system has been in use and the number of patients treated during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No system of alternate medicines like Homoeopathy or Ayurveda is in practice to treat soldiers for frost bite.

(b) Does not arise.

Efficacy of Yoga and Herbal medicines for staying fit at higher altitude

765. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Yoga and Herbal medicines have been found to help in starting fit at higher altitude;

(b) if so, whether Defence authorities have held trials of these medicines; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yoga and herbal medicine have been found to be helpful in staying fit for the soldiers at high altitude.

(b) and (c) A number of studies conducted by scientific team of Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences (DIPAS) have shown that Composite Indian Herbal Preparations (CHIPs) are beneficial in the extreme altitude, cold area or in low intensity conflict situations. In order to evaluate acceptability and subjective efficacy of CHIP-II in extreme altitudes *i.e.* beyond about 5000 m, a large-scale trial on troops operative at these heights is in progress.

Purchase of bullet proof jackets for soldiers

†766. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have signed any deal for the procurement of bullet proof jackets for soldiers during last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any tender has been invited presently for procurement of bullet proof jackets for the soldiers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) During the last two years, a Contract for procurement of 6000 Nos. Bullet Proof Jackets (BPJs) was concluded on 21.3.2001 with M/s Tata Advanced Materials Ltd., Bangalore. Further orders for supply of additional 16,000 Nos. Bullet Proof Jackets were placed on the aforesaid firm under option clause, on the same rates/terms and conditions *vide* Addendum No. 1 dated 21.3.2001 (for quantity 1000 BPJs) and Addendum No. 2 dated 26.11.2001 (for quantity 15000 BPJs).

2. A request for Technical and Commercial Proposals for Light Weight Bullet Proof Jackets was issued on 23.1.2002 to 96 vendors (81 Foreign and 15 Indian). A brief notice in this regard was put on Ministry of Defence Web Site and "Request for Proposal" was issued to 8 more Vendors, subsequently, on their request. In all 28 vendors responded to the "Request for Proposal". Their Technical proposals where opened on 15.3.2002 by a Price Negotiation Committee.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.